



No. 266 Rs. 3.00

MANDUKA— *The lucky astrologer*

A TALE FROM THE KATHASARITSAGARA



AND
The Hidden Meaning

The *Kathasaritsagara*, Somadeva's Sanskrit classic, is as its title indicates, an ocean of tales—tales of romance, adventure and humour. Of the tales of humour the best is perhaps the story of Manduka on which the first story in this Amar Chitra katha is based.

The second story is adapted from a popular Hindi folktale which was evidently inspired by the story of Manduka. For storytellers and bards, the *Kathasaritsagara* was an endless storehouse of themes. For that matter, not only the humble bard but even scholarly poets and playwrights like Bhasa and Kalidasa had often turned to Somadeva's classic for a plot.

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MANDUKA - THE LUCKY ASTROLOGER

अरव कुमार पांडे

ONE DAY A POOR BRAHMANA WAS PASSING BY THE HOUSE OF A MERCHANT.

HEY!
THERE'S
A WEDDING
GOING ON
THERE!

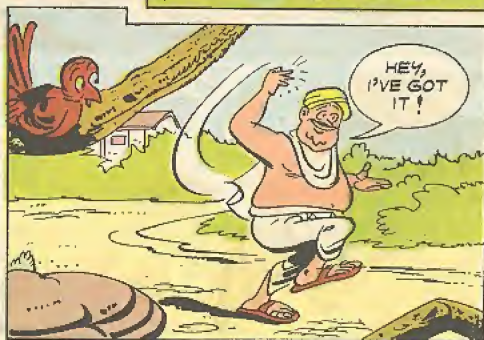
शिवम् पांडे
अरव कुमार पांडे
त्रिवेणी नगर III, बल्लार

NO ONE
EVEN BOTHERED
TO TELL ME
ABOUT IT.

WHO TELLS ME ANYTHING?
EVEN WHEN I WAS A CHILD,
EVERYBODY IGNORED
ME.

EXCEPT FATHER, OF
COURSE, WHO NEVER FAILED
TO TELL ME ONE THING
EVERY SO OFTEN.

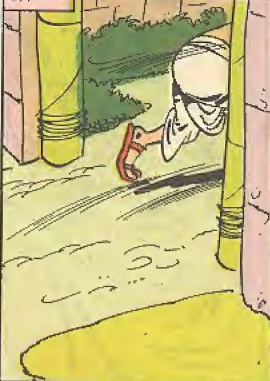
YOU ARE AS DULL AS
A MANDUKA* IN
A WELL.



THE BRAHMANA RAN BACK...



...TO THE PLACE WHERE THE WEDDING WAS GOING ON...



...AND QUIETLY LED AWAY THE HORSE ON WHICH THE BRIDEGROOM HAD COME.



THE NEXT MORNING—

MASTER, THE
BRIDEGROOM'S HORSE
HAS DISAPPEARED!

DISAPPEARED?

HOW COULD IT
DISAPPEAR? GO
AND LOOK FOR
IT!

WE ALREADY
HAVE, MASTER.

IT HAS
VANISHED
WITHOUT
A TRACE.

OH, THIS IS
TERRIBLE!

WHAT AM I TO
DO NOW?

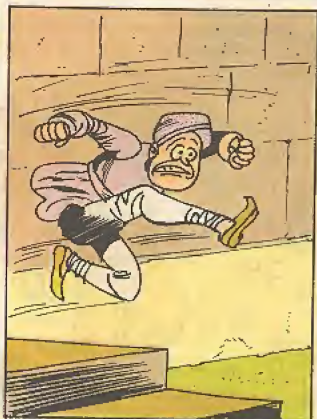
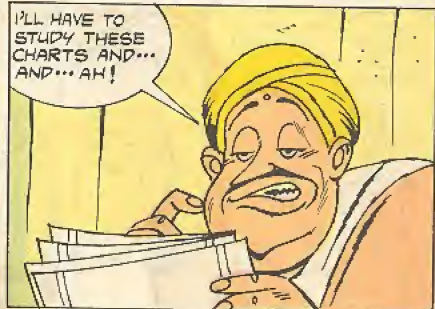
MASTER,
THERE'S A WOMAN
OUTSIDE WHO SAYS
WE SHOULD SEEK
THE HELP OF HER
HUSBAND.

SHE SAYS HE'S AN
ASTROLOGER.

GO FETCH HIM
AT ONCE!

SOMETIME LATER —

THE ASTROLOGER IS
HERE, MASTER.





I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

SO THE ASTROLOGER WAS RIGHT.

THE MERCHANT WAS OVERJOYED TO SEE THE HORSE AGAIN.

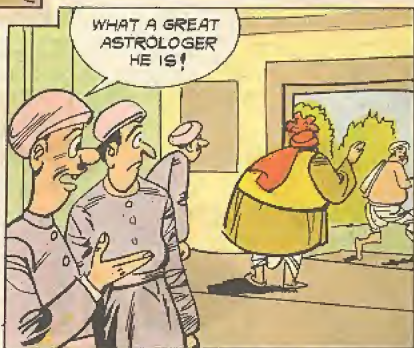


YOU HAVE HELPED ME SAVE MY FACE.



I CAN NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH.

IT WAS NOTHING... ALL IN A DAY'S WORK!



WHAT A GREAT ASTROLOGER HE IS!



THE MERCHANT'S SERVANTS BEGAN TO TALK ABOUT WHAT THE BRAHMANA HAD DONE.

...AND HE TOLD US THE EXACT SPOT AT WHICH WE COULD FIND THE HORSE!

YOU DON'T SAY!



I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT HE WAS A HALF-WIT.

YOU SHOULD NEVER GO BY APPEARANCES.

SOON PEOPLE EVERYWHERE BEGAN TO SHOW HIM RESPECT.



AT LAST THE MANDUKA HAS JUMPED OUT OF THE WELL!



HE TALKS TO HIMSELF!

ALL GREAT MEN HAVE SOME PECULIARITY OR OTHER.



THE BRAHMANA'S FAME SPREAD FAR AND WIDE. THEN ONE DAY —



YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED AT THE PALACE. PLEASE COME WITH ME.



LATER, AT THE PALACE —





THE BRAHMANA SHUT HIMSELF UP IN HIS CHAMBER AND PREPARED FOR THE WORST.

WELL... WHY DID I CLAIM TO BE WHAT I AM NOT? NOW I WILL JUST HAVE TO PAY FOR IT.



IT'S MY TONGUE WHICH HAS GOT ME INTO ALL THIS TROUBLE.

JUST THEN, OUTSIDE THE CHAMBER—

HE IS A GREAT ASTROLOGER.



HE WILL SOON KNOW THAT IT IS I WHO STOLE THE NECKLACE.



WHY, OH, WHY DID I DO SUCH A FOOLISH THING!



LET ME SEE WHAT HE IS DOING.



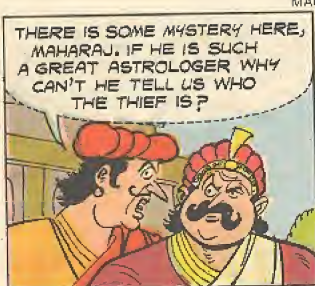
THE BRAHMANA, UNAWARE THAT THE MAID WAS PEEPING THROUGH THE KEYHOLE, BEGAN TO SCOLD HIS TONGUE.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, JIHVAH*? WHY DID YOU DO IT?









NOW I'LL HAVE
TO TELL HIM THAT
I AM NOT REALLY
AN ASTROLOGER...



...AND THAT
I FOOLED HIM AND
EVERYBODY
ELSE.



HE'LL SURELY
PUT ME TO
DEATH!



O MANDUKA*, YOU
WERE BETTER
OFF IN THE
WELL.

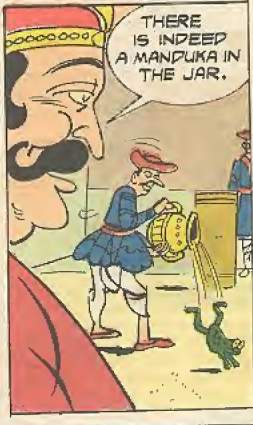


WELL DONE! I SHOULD
NEVER HAVE DOUBTED
YOUR POWERS.



EH!

THERE
IS INDEED
A MANDUKA IN
THE JAR.



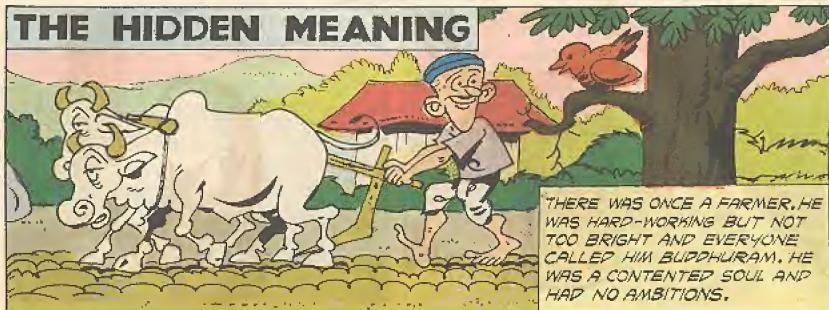
THE KING REWARDED THE BRAHMANA
WITH COSTLY GIFTS...



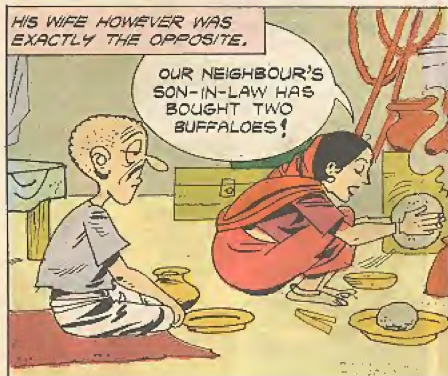
...AND HE RETURNED HOME TO
A HERO'S WELCOME.



THE HIDDEN MEANING



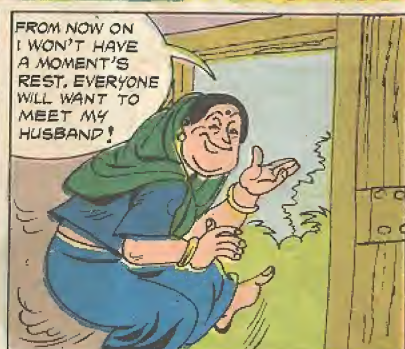
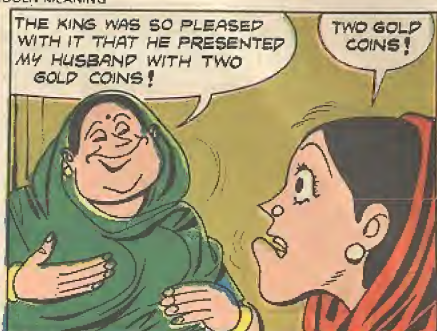
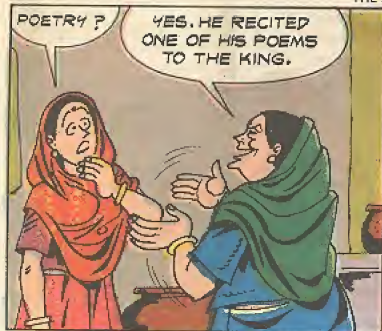
HIS WIFE HOWEVER WAS EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE.





MATTERS CAME TO A HEAD WHEN ONE DAY THE NEIGHBOUR EXCITEDLY BURST INTO THE HOUSE.







...AND
ALL YOU CAN
THINK OF IS
FOOD!



WELL, I HAVE HAD
ENOUGH! YOU ARE GOING
TO SIT DOWN AND
WRITE A POEM
TOO!

A POEM!

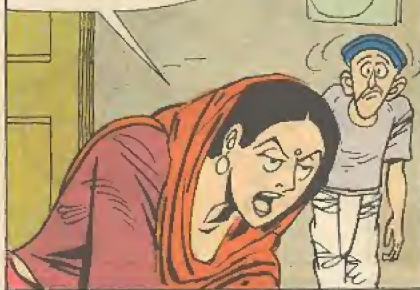


BUT I DON'T KNOW
HOW TO READ AND
WRITE.

I'LL TEACH
YOU!



IF HER HUSBAND CAN
WRITE POETRY, SO
CAN YOU!



I'LL TEACH YOU THE
ALPHABET FIRST, WE'LL
BEGIN RIGHT
NOW!



WHAT
ABOUT
FOOD?

YOU'LL GET YOUR FOOD
AS SOON AS YOU HAVE
LEARNT THE FIRST
LETTER OF THE
ALPHABET.





EVERY DAY HIS WIFE WOULD TEACH HIM ONE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET...

...AND THEN SHE WOULD SEND HIM TO THE RIVERSIDE TO PRACTISE WRITING IT.



BUT POOR BUDDHURAM HAD A BAD MEMORY.

NOW WHAT DID SHE
SAY THE THIRD
LETTER WAS?



EEEE?
BEEE?
EHH?

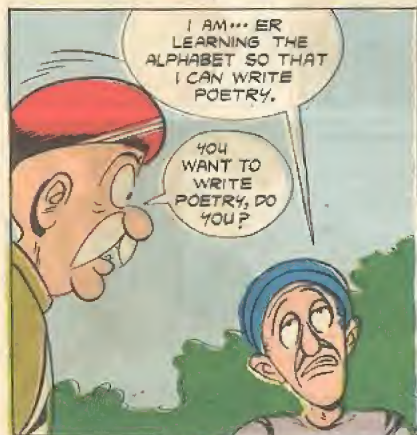


WHAT ARE YOU
DOING MY GOOD
MAN?



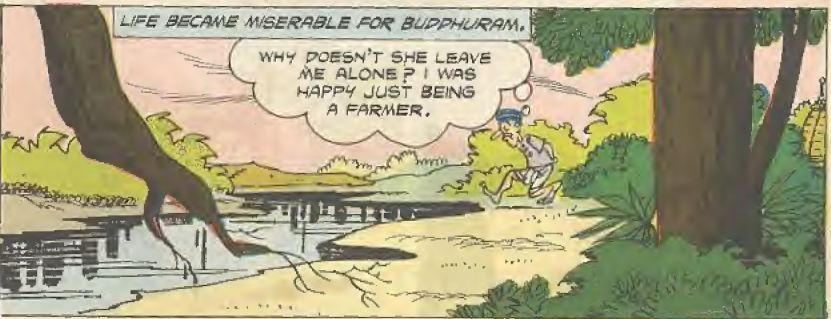
I AM... ER
LEARNING THE
ALPHABET SO THAT
I CAN WRITE
POETRY.

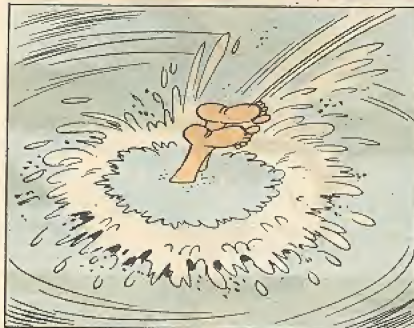
YOU
WANT TO
WRITE
POETRY, DO
YOU?



AND DO YOU
THINK EVERYONE WHO
KNOWS THE ALPHABET
CAN WRITE
POETRY?







WHAT A STROKE
OF LUCK! BUT NOW
THAT I HAVE GOT
INSPIRATION I MUST
WRITE A POEM!



BUT ABOUT
WHAT? ABOUT
WHOM?



AH, THAT CROW...!
HE IS SHARPENING
HIS BEAK IN
EXPECTATION OF
A FEAST.

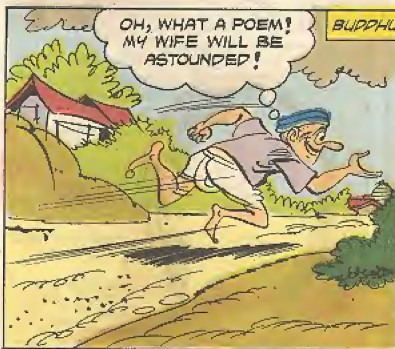


YOU DIP IT IN WATER
AND SHARPEN IT... AGAIN
AND AGAIN.

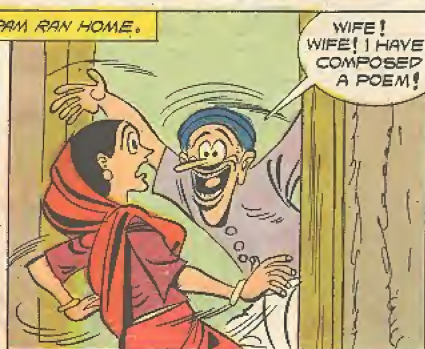


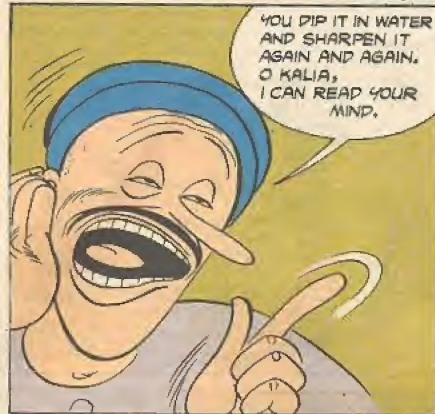
O, KALIA
I CAN READ
YOUR
MIND!





BUDDHURAM RAN HOME.





WHEN HE GOT THERE —

I HAVE COME
TO RECITE
A POEM.

YOU
CAN GO
IN. THE
SESSION
HAS JUST
BEGUN.

BUDDHURAM WENT IN AND TOOK HIS PLACE
AMONG THE POETS.

SOME OF THESE MEN WERE FAMED
THROUGHOUT THE LAND AND THEY HELD THE
AUDIENCE SPELLBOUND.

BUDDHURAM WAITED IMPATIENTLY FOR HIS TURN. FINALLY
THE LAST MAN FINISHED HIS RECITATION.

NOW THEY'LL
KNOW WHAT REAL
POETRY IS.

IS THERE
ANYBODY
LEFT?

YES!!!

YOU
MAY BEGIN,
THEN.

BUDDHURAM CLEARED HIS THROAT, THREW OUT HIS CHEST AND BEGAN TO RECITE HIS COMPOSITION IN A LOUD BOOMING VOICE.



YOU DIP IT IN WATER AND SHARPEN IT AGAIN AND AGAIN. O KALIA, I CAN READ YOUR MIND.

IS THAT A POEM?



THE WHOLE AUDIENCE BURST OUT LAUGHING...



...BUT THE KING MAINTAINED A DISCREET SILENCE.



NO ONE WOULD DARE TO COME HERE AND RECITE SUCH NONSENSE UNLESS THERE WAS SOME MEANING IN THE WORDS.



AND THE MAN APPEARS SO CONFIDENT. HE'S SURELY NOT A FOOL.

HE TURNED TO HIS MINISTER.



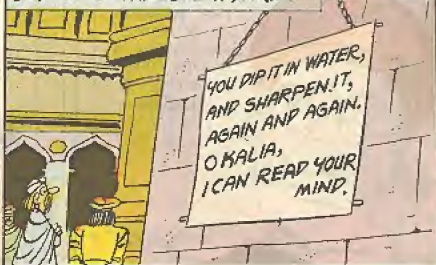
WELL, WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE POEM?

I... WELL...





BUDDHURAM'S COMPOSITION WAS WRITTEN ON A HUGE BOARD AND THE BOARD WAS SET UP IN THE COURTYARD.



MANY POETS AND SCHOLARS PUZZLED OVER THE RHYME...



...BUT NO ONE COULD SEE ANY SPECIAL MEANING IN THE WORDS.



DAYS PASSED. THEN ONE MORNING, AS THE KING WAS BEING PREPARED FOR A SHAVE BY HIS BARBER —



THE BARBER PICKED UP HIS RAZOR...



...DIPPED IT INTO A CUP OF WATER...



...AND BEGAN TO SHARPEN IT.



...AGAIN AND AGAIN.
O KALIA, I CAN READ
YOUR MIND.



FORGIVE ME,
MAHARAJ!



IT WAS NOT MY
IDEA AT ALL!
THEY ASKED
ME TO DO IT!



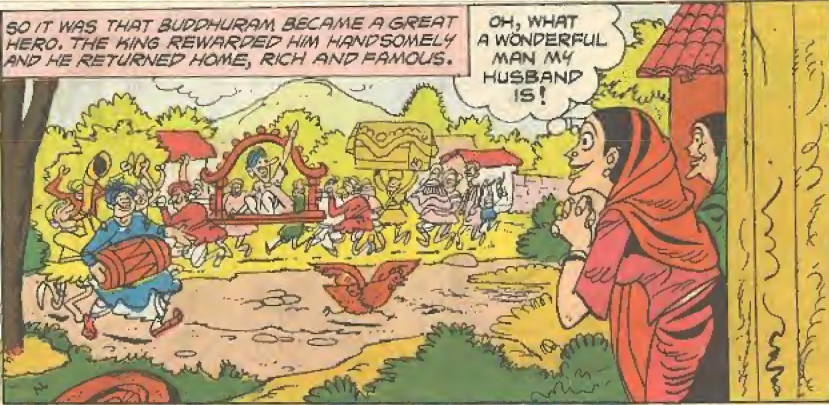
CUT YOUR
THROAT.

OH,
I SEE IT
ALL NOW.





SO IT WAS THAT BUDDHURAM BECAME A GREAT HERO. THE KING REWARDED HIM HANDSOMELY AND HE RETURNED HOME, RICH AND FAMOUS.



Jeevan and Hanu meet the human-est creatures

THE THINGS DOLPHINS DO!

Man has long been fascinated by dolphins. In return, these friendly mischievous creatures often seek the company of men. Many scientists believe that dolphins may be among the most intelligent creatures on earth... as intelligent as man, if not more so. Ancient Greeks believed that they were actually humans who exchanged land for sea, assuming the form of fishes.



Dolphins can be trained to perform amazing tricks. Such as complicated leaps and jumps, spins, dives, splashes — often in time to music. Or pulling a dog on a surfboard. Or even playing basketball.



When humans are near, dolphins stick their noses out of the water and make sounds. They are probably trying to communicate with men. Scientists are studying their language so that they can reply.

Dolphins produce a rich variety of sounds by shifting air through passages in their skulls. A 'lens' of fat in their forehead focuses on these sounds. By studying echoes, dolphins can pinpoint a small marble dropped into the far end of a pool.



every bit of trash they fetched from the water. He grew suspicious when one 12-year old named Dr. Spock began claiming too many rewards. He finally realized that Dr. Spock had hidden a stack of waste paper in a corner of the pool, and was exchanging it for fish, bit by bit. The dolphin was training the trainer!

One dolphin-trainer trained his pets to tidy up their pool. He would reward them with fish for



Millions of years ago, dolphins were land dwellers. Gradually they took to the sea, changing their entire body structure.

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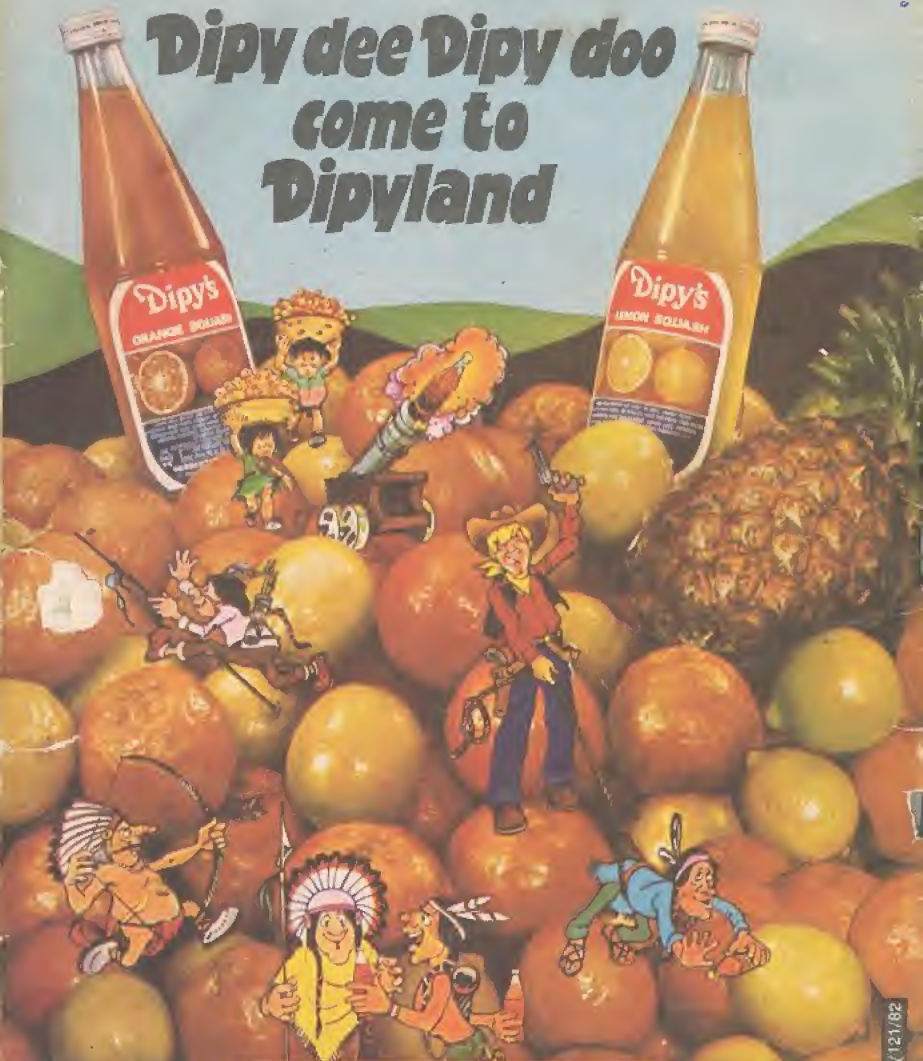
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Dipy dee Dipy doo come to Dipyland



Yippee it's Dipy's!